

BEARE SMOOTH SUSPENSION SERIES WINNER AT WESTERN GRAND IN THE HAND

On a night where a Victorian title for Junior Sedans was being held the Street Stocks came to town at Hamilton Speedway Club's Western Speedway venue on January the 18th for the final round of the Smooth Suspension Super Series & it was the leader coming into the night Anthony Beare that left with the bulk of the cash making it three feature wins from three rounds & more importantly, the series champion title atop the points ahead of Brad McClure & Ricky Throckmorton who made his move getting past home club member, Mick Clark.

Unfortunately time constraints on the night curtailed the anticipated \$1500 major prize going off in the 'Smooth Suspension All Star' race, something that was out of the control of Hamilton Speedway Club, however fans enjoyed the first ever 'Western Grand In the Hand' event.

Nine heat races were held in which to determine the starting positions for the feature event and Beare from the front row of the field in heat 1a got out to just over a five second lead from Daniel Drewett to win ahead of him leading all eight laps. Lloyd Wallace was in third with Mark Gartner, Donald Irving, Richard Bansemer, Brad McClure, Scott Merrett & Troy Hose rounding out the field with the latter two a lap down on the leader.

In a much closer affair in a slightly slower heat Darren Paisley took the win by .123 of a second in the second heat which put him into the All-Star race as an automatic qualifier after Morris Ahearn who led up until lap seven easily, suffered mechanical malfunction leaving him limp to the infield as Paisley won the race. Steven Gartner finished in second with Scott Bull, Ricky Throckmorton, Brooke Ferguson & Scott Mason finishing whilst Chris Whatmore in his beautiful new race car, was already getting hammered about as drivers jostled for position.

The final heat of round one was a win for the third heat in succession to a front row starter when Darren Giacometti won ahead of Darryl Atkinson & Shaun Henry. Giacometti led from the first to the last lap with Atkinson, Henry, Mick Clark, Steven Watts, Daniel Brittain & Brad Trainor crossing the line behind the winner.

The closest race of the night was the fourth heat with Warrnambool youngster Watts in an ex Brad McClure driven car being chased to the line by McClure himself only to finish .101 behind as he scraped paint on the concrete wall. Watts led all the way with McClure in second from lap three til the end. Third was Mark Gartner, Irving, Atkinson, Giacometti, Bansemer, Trainor & Hose.

Throckmorton then won the fifth heat of the evening making it five front row starters winning heats in a row & also making him the second driver on the night to qualify direct to the All Star race. Leading from start to finish 'Throcky' was able to hold out Ferguson who made a pass on Steven

Gartner for the position on lap eight then Bull, Merrett, Brittain & Ahearn 1 lap down again with mechanical troubles.

The second Ford victory went the way of Henry in heat six where he was another start to finish race leader. Clark held out Beare for second with Drewett, Wallace, Mason & Paisley.

In the fastest heat race of the night at 2mins 31.549 seconds some 12 seconds faster than the first heat of the night & 4 seconds faster than any other heat, McClure from pole position won from Irving, Bansemer, Ahearn, Paisley, Wallace & Trainor in heat seven. McClure finished almost six seconds in front of the pack whilst the race was a disaster for Ferguson & Clark who both crashed out before a lap was in the books.

Mark Gartner made pleased Ford fans when he won in heat eight just .349 of a second ahead of Beare a flag bearer for Holden fans. Atkinson was in second until lap five with Beare and Drewett passing into second and third places. Atkinson finished fourth then Throckmorton, Steven Gartner, Whatmore and Bull.

The final heat race dished out another new qualifier to the All Star race when Mason led from start to finish. Watts started in seventh moved into second on lap four and he chased however Mason the winner from Watts, Henry, Giacometti, Merrett, Nathan Dunn & Brittain.

The twenty lap feature event got a way to a messy start. Bull couldn't fire his car & Giacometti, Irving and Wallace all suffered damage in a melee. Beare led at the restart and was never headed.

Watts, Henry, Mark Gartner & Throckmorton were sitting behind Beare on lap on, they remained unchanged whilst sixth and seventh places changed more than once between McClure & Steven Gartner.

Beares win came with a 2.599 second margin ahead of Watts, Henry, Mark Gartner, Throckmorton, Steven Gartner, Clark, Atkinson, McClure, Mason, Bansemer, Drewett, Paisley & Merrett the lucky "Duell's Furniture Removalists' 19th man who got to start instead of Brooke Ferguson due to a swollen ankle.

After the event Beare spoke of winning the race and the series. "Thank you to Hamilton Speedway Club for taking on our event, DMT Sports Media – Dean Thompson for creating it all the sponsors from Smooth Suspension to the contingency supporters also, without you all we don't go racing and have our fun, so from my team thank you. It is an honour to win the race ahead of Watts & Henry, they are going to be winners soon one feels. As for the series I am quite pleased to win a series one

of my supporters has contributed too, Squiggles puts his heart and soul into our sport, thank you Squiggles.”

Series Top sixteen drivers

- 1st) Anthony Beare – South Australia – Holden – 576
- 2nd) Brad McClure – Avalon – Holden – 463
- 3rd) Ricky Throckmorton – Colac – Holden – 354
- 4th) Mick Clark – Hamilton – Holden – 337
- 5th) Darren Giacometti – Redline – Holden – 319
- 6th) Steven Watts – Warrnambool – Holden – 300
- 7th) Shaun Henry – Ballarat – Ford – 272
- 8th) Scott Bull – Swan Hill – Ford – 263
- 9th) Morris Ahearn – Alexandra – Holden 262
- 10th) Daniel Drewett – Mildura – Ford 249
- 11th) Darren Paisley – Redline – Ford 242
- 12th) Richard Bansemer – Horsham – Holden – 225
- 13th) Mark Gartner – South Australia – Ford – 225
- 14th) Darryl Atkinson – Redline – Ford – 220
- 15th) Lloyd Wallace – South Australia – Holden – 197
- 16th) Scott Mason – Mildura – Ford - 165

Written by

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for Smooth Suspension Super Series for Street Stocks